

Springdale Fire Department

Policy & Procedures Manual

Volume 2 – Operations

Section 201 – Personnel Safety

201.7 – Declaring a “MAYDAY”

In the event that personnel who are operating in a hazardous or potentially hazardous environment become in need of immediate assistance, rescue, extrication, etc. or other circumstance where personnel feel they are in an immediate life or limb threatening situation, they are to advise Command of the situation by transmitting a MAYDAY over the radio channel which operations are being conducted to advise the Incident Commander and other personnel of their situation.

Examples of situations that could result in a MAYDAY transmission include:

- **FALLS:** falls (down stairs, through main floor, through the roof, etc.) that result in personal injury and/or the need for immediate assistance
- **COLLAPSE:** collapse of a ceiling, roof, or wall that results in entrapment, personal injury and/or the need for immediate assistance
- **ENTANGLEMENT:** from wiring or other unknown obstacles that result in the need for immediate assistance
- **OTHER INJURY:** thermal burn, traumatic injury, or medical illness that results in entrapment and/or the need for immediate assistance
- **LOST:** disoriented within a structure or other hazardous atmosphere that results in the need for immediate assistance
- **LOW AIR/NO AIR:** SCBA malfunction or air supply running exhausted or nearly exhausted with the need for immediate assistance
- **MISSING or UNACCOUNTED FOR PERSONNEL:** company officers and/or team leaders who recognize missing and/or unaccounted for crew member while operating in a hazardous environment

Personnel transmitting a MAYDAY shall initiate the message by transmitting “MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY”, and then should provide as much detailed information as possible concerning the situation and any special needs.

WHO:	who is involved (unit designation, group name, etc.)
WHAT:	what happened (trapped from collapse, lost, out of air, etc.)
WHERE:	where involved personnel are or their last known location (A side, kitchen, etc.)
NEEDS:	what equipment, resources, supplies, are needed.

Example #1: **“MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY”**
 WHO: **“This is E2 Charlie”**
 WHAT: **“I’m out of air”**
 WHERE: **“I am in the interior on Side B”**
 NEEDS: **“I need a replacement air pack/bottle”**

Example #2: **“MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY”**

WHO: **“This is Search and Rescue”**

WHAT: **“We are trapped from a roof collapse”**

WHERE: **“We are in the upstairs interior on side D”**

NEEDS: **“We need access/egress made at the upstairs side D window”**

MAYDAY transmissions shall have priority over all other radio traffic.

All other personnel shall maintain radio silence in order for the Incident Commander to effectively communicate with personnel transmitting the MAYDAY.

Personnel transmitting a MAYDAY must confirm that the Incident Commander acknowledges their radio traffic. If the Incident Commander does not acknowledge the MAYDAY, personnel shall repeat the transmission of the MAYDAY as identified above.

If the second attempt in transmitting the MAYDAY is not acknowledged by the Incident Commander, personnel transmitting the MAYDAY shall then activate the Emergency Transmit button on their portable radio. Whenever the Emergency Transmit button is activated, personnel must wait 3-4 seconds for the emergency alert signal to clear before any transmission is broadcasted.

If the Incident Commander still has not acknowledged the MAYDAY after personnel activate the Emergency Transmit button and repeat the MAYDAY, personnel should then attempt to transmit the MAYDAY over a different radio channel. In this case, personnel should first transmit the MAYDAY on “talk around” of the tactical channel currently assigned, and then on the dispatch channel.

If personnel who have declared a MAYDAY are able to self rescue, they shall immediately cancel the MAYDAY by radio transmission to the Incident Commander providing a PAR at the time of MAYDAY cancellation.

Upon receiving a MAYDAY transmission, the Incident Commander shall immediately acknowledge such receipt of the MAYDAY by transmitting over the radio the following:

“Command to all units maintain radio silence for MAYDAY traffic.”

“Command to E2 Charlie, I copy your MAYDAY, you are out of air in the interior on Side B, and you need a replacement air pack.”

All personnel shall remain on the tactical fire ground frequency. Radio silence should only be broken if personnel need to declare their own Mayday, conveying critical emergency traffic such as additional collapse or deteriorating conditions, or they have located the firefighter(s) and are reporting their actions being taken. All other personnel on scene are to coordinate their activities through the Incident Commander (no freelance rescue efforts). Personnel should continue with their current assignments and operations and shall not redirect their assigned activities to attempt a rescue without the knowledge and consent of the Incident Commander.